



SENATOR
BILL HARDIMAN

E-Hardiman Herald



*Chair, Families & Human
Services Committee
Appropriations Committee:
Chair, Family Independence
Agency, Commerce Labor
& Economic Development,
Capitol Outlay,
Higher Education*

HARDIMAN HERALD – JANUARY 2006

BE SURE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FREE TAX SERVICES

Last year, \$3 million was returned to the Kent County economy and taxpayers' pockets because of the work of the Kent County Tax Credit Coalition (KCTCC). The coalition, which prepares tax returns for free and helps qualified taxpayers claim the Earned Income Tax Credit, plans to increase the amount returned to the community this year.

Citizens with a household income of \$38,000 or less may use the services of the KCTCC. Volunteers prepare and file the tax returns online at no cost to the client. In addition, KCTCC volunteers determine a taxpayer's eligibility to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit and other credits that could provide a refund of up to \$4,400.

"One of our recent success stories involved a family of three that left with a \$6,000 refund after using our free services," said Brenda Brame, KCTCC. According to Internal Revenue Service data, over \$11 million dollars went unclaimed in the Kent County area in 2003 alone.

For more information contact the Kent County Tax Credit Coalition (KCTCC) at (616) 752-8647.

SENATOR HARDIMAN TO INTRODUCE KEY RESOLUTION

Today Senator Bill Hardiman introduced a senate resolution to memorialize the Congress to enact legislation reauthorizing the Ryan White CARE Act to provide comprehensive care for the neediest victims of HIV/AIDS.

The Ryan White Care Act was first enacted in 1990, and was amended in 1996 and 2000. To date, the Act reaches over 500,000 individuals a year, making it the largest federal program for people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States.

According to figures compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 2003 Latinos made up more than 20 percent of new AIDS cases. African Americans in 2003 accounted for 49 percent of AIDS cases and over 42 percent of the population with HIV, according to the department. In addition, 67 percent of HIV positive African Americans were women.

A modernization of the Act is necessary because of the alarming gaps in treatment which create waiting list for necessary life saving drugs.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH IS A TIME TO REMEMBER

Black History Month is an ideal time to remember the courage and commitment of Dr. King, Medgar Evers, Mary McLeod Bethune, Rosa Parks, Dr. W.W. Plummer, Ray Tardy, Helen Claytor, Rev. Lyman Parks, Dr. Edward Jones, Jr. and many other leaders who fought for equality for all and made history themselves. Thank you to all who inspired a movement and challenged the order of the day.

Every year the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus celebrates February as African American History Month with a special event at the State Capitol Building. Our 2006 Celebration will be held on Wednesday, February 22, 2006 and will feature a Keynote Speaker along with a special musical and oratory performances. The program will be from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm with dinner immediately following. The theme for 2006 is "Celebrating Unity & Embracing Diversity."

In addition, the 2006 Celebration will also feature several groups and exhibits to be held in the Capitol Rotunda between 12 pm and 1:00 pm, Tuesday thru Thursday of the week of February 16th, 2006 and the following week on Tuesday, February 21 and Wednesday, February 22. These hour long programs will focus on five special themes: Civil Rights Leaders; Entertainers and Sports Figures; Scientists, Doctors and Inventors; Spiritual Reflections; and Entrepreneurs and Philanthropists.

All of these programs are free to the public; I would encourage anyone interested to attend one of the above programs.

HARDIMAN INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO STOP RULES AIMED AT PENALIZING NON-UNION BUSINESSES

Senator Hardiman sponsored SB1026, which is the lead bill of a package aimed at stopping the Granholm administration from instituting administrative rules aimed at penalizing non-union businesses in Michigan.

Senate Bills 1026-1030 were prompted by a rule change being considered by the state Department of Human Services for 5,000 Adult Foster Care and Home for the Aged businesses. The rules establish onerous new regulations that can most easily be met by providing union representation for a facility's employees.

Sen. Bill Hardiman is concerned about these new rules limiting choices for vulnerable citizens and driving up costs for families.

In an issued statement to the press Hardiman stated, "The state should not be in the business of enforcing or encouraging unionization. This is not an anti-union issue," he continued, "Such an administrative barrier sends the wrong message to businesses. This is a blatant attempt to favor union shops or force others to unionize and we need to stop it. It's bad policy and over-regulation."

Senate Bills 1026-1030 have been referred the Senate Families and Human Services Committee, which Senator Hardiman Chairs.

SENATOR HARDIMAN DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS

Senator Hardiman will be holding monthly district office hours the first Monday of each month from 10:00am - 11:30am throughout the 29th district. Be sure to talk to the Senator at these upcoming office hours:

- **Monday, February 6, 2006, Beaners Gourmet Coffee, 2739 Breton, Suite B., Grand Rapids, MI 49546**
- **Monday, March 6, 2006, Baxter Community Center, 935 Baxter St SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506**

Senator Hardiman will hold this time each month so constituents of the 29th district have an opportunity to speak with him one-on-one about any questions or concerns they may have regarding state issues. You can also contact Senator Hardiman via his toll-free number: 1-866-305-2129 or visit Senator Hardiman's homepage to set-up a meeting outside of the district hours, www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/hardiman

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Hardiman Herald is designed to provide residents and organizations with a timely update of Senator Bill Hardiman's activity in Lansing. If you have any questions, please contact Senator Hardiman's office.

Mail: P.O. Box 30036 Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

Toll-Free Phone: (866) 305-2129

Fax: (517) 373-5801

E-mail: www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/hardiman